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coming again'? Or had Mrs. McClellan, in spite of all affection, a little critical devil that sometimes nudged her into smiling? I wonder. General Meade says that she was a charming woman. 'Her manners are delightful; full of life and vivacity, great affability, and very ready in conversation. . . . I came away quite charmed with her *esprit* and vivacity.' Remember this when you read some of the following extracts, and you will wonder as I do.

But as to the general and his view of himself. He considered that he was humble and modest, and very fearful of elation and vainglory. There can be no doubt that he was absolutely sincere in this, and we must reconcile it with some other things as best we can. How genuinely touching and solemn is his account of his parting with his predecessor, Scott, whom, nevertheless, he had treated rather cavalierly. 'I saw there the end of a long, active, and ambitious life, the end of the career of the first soldier of his nation; and it was a feeble old man scarce able to walk, hardly any one there to see him off but his successor. Should I ever become vainglorious and ambitious, remind me of that spectacle. I pray every night and every morning that I may become neither vain nor ambitious, that I may be neither depressed by disaster nor elated by success, and that I may keep one single object in view — the good of my country.'

The self-denying patriotism here suggested is even more conspicuous in McClellan's analysis of himself than humility or modesty, and again no one can dispute that his professions of such a nature are absolutely sincere. However one may criticize the celebrated letter of advice written to Lincoln from Harrison's Landing, it is impossible to resist the impetuous solemnity of the closing words. 'In carrying out any system of policy which you may form you will require a Commander-in-Chief of the Army — one who possesses your confidence, understands your views, and who is competent to execute your orders by directing the military forces of the nation to the accomplishment of the objects by you proposed. I do not ask this place for myself. I am willing to serve you in such position as you may assign me, and I will do so as faithfully as ever subordinate served superior. I may be on the brink of eternity, and as I hope forgiveness from my Maker I have written this letter with sincerity towards you and from love for my country.'

It is necessary to bear these passages — and there are many similar ones — in mind, as we progress with McClellan; for the leadership of one of the most splendid armies in the world through the great campaigns of the Peninsula and Antietam fostered a temper that often seems incompatible with modesty and sometimes even with patriotism. We must remember that he found the whole country looking to him with enthusiasm. We must remember that he was surrounded — to some extent he surrounded himself — by men who petted, praised, and flattered him. We must remember that in the war, from the first, he never had the wholesome discipline of subordinate position, but was one of the few generals who began by commanding an independent army. We must remember especially the fortunate — or unfortunate — circumstances of his earlier life. As Colonel McClure says, he would have been a different man, 'had he been a barefoot boy, trained to tag and marbles, jostling his way in the world.'

The explanation of many things is well given by a passage in one of his earlier letters. 'I never went through such a scene in my life, and never expect to go through such another one.

You would have been surprised at the excitement. At Chillicothe the ladies had prepared a dinner, and I had to be trotted through. They gave me about twenty beautiful bouquets and almost killed me with kindness. The trouble will be to fill their expectations, they seem to be so high. I could hear them say, "He is our own general"; "Look at him, how young he is"; "*He* will thrash them"; "He'll do!" etc., etc., *ad infinitum*.'

Doubtless there are cool and critical heads that can stand this sort of thing without being turned, but McClellan's was not one of them. Even in his Mexican youth a certain satisfaction with his own achievements and capacity can be detected in his letters. 'I have work enough before me to occupy half a dozen persons for a while; but I rather think I can get through it.' In the full sunshine of glory this satisfaction rose to a pitch which sometimes seems abnormal.

Let us survey its different manifestations. As the organizer of an army it is generally admitted that McClellan had few superiors. He took the disorderly mob which fled from the first Bull Run and made it the superb military instrument that broke Lee's prestige at Gettysburg and finally strangled the Confederacy. In achieving this his European studies must have been of great help to him, as setting an ideal of full equipment and finished discipline. Some think his ideal was too exacting and involved unnecessary delay. He himself very sensibly denies this and disclaims any desire for an impossible perfection. In short, praise from others as to his organizing faculty would be disputed by few or none. Yet even on this point one would prefer to hear others praise and not the man himself. 'I do not know who could have organized the Army of the Potomac as I did.'

It has a strange sound. And this is not a private letter, but a sentence deliberately penned for posterity.

II

And how did he judge himself in other lines of military achievement? What was McClellan's opinion of McClellan as a strategist and thinker? From the beginning of the war he was ever fertile in plans, which, as he asserted, would ensure speedy success and the downfall of the Confederacy, plans involving not only military movements but the conduct of politics. He sent these plans to Scott in the early days, and was snubbed. Later he submitted them to Lincoln, and the last was snubbed, by silence, even more severely than the first had been. McClellan worked out these plans in loving and minute detail. Every contingency was foreseen and every possible need in men, supplies, and munitions, was figured on. As a consequence, the needs could never be filled — and the plans could never be executed. The very boldness and grasp of the conception made the execution limited and feeble. And the plans were so exquisitely complete that in this stumbling world they could never be put into practical effect. I have seen such men. And so have you.

On the other hand, the fact that the plans were never realized left them all the more attractive in their ideal beauty. 'Had the Army of the Potomac been permitted to remain on the line of the James, I would have crossed to the south bank of the river, and while engaging Lee's attention in front of Malvern, would have made a rapid movement in force on Petersburg, having gained which, I would have operated against Richmond and its communications from the west, having already gained those from the south.' Oh, the

charm of that 'would have,' which no man can absolutely gainsay! Or take a more general and even more significant passage: 'Had the measures recommended been carried into effect the war would have been closed in less than one half the time and with infinite saving of blood and treasure.' What a balm is in 'would have' for an aching memory and a wounded pride! And there is comfort, also, in repeating to one's self — and others — the acknowledgment of courteous enemies, 'that they feared me more than any of the Northern generals, and that I had struck them harder blows in the full prime of their strength.'

Well, a general should be a leader as well as a thinker, should not only plan battles but inspire them. How was it with McClellan in this regard? Those who fought under him have some fault to find. Without the slightest question of their commander's personal courage, they think that he was too absorbed in remote considerations to throw himself with passion into direct conflict. 'He was the most extraordinary man I ever saw,' says Heintzelman. 'I do not see how any man could leave so much to others and be so confident that everything would go just right.' With which, however, should be compared Lee's remark: 'I think and work with all my power to bring the troops to the right place at the right time; then I have done my duty. As soon as I order them forward into battle, I leave my army in the hands of God.' But McClellan himself had no doubts about his leadership. There can be no question but that his grandiloquent proclamations spoke his whole heart. 'Soldiers! I have heard that there is danger here. I have come to place myself at your head and to share it with you. I fear now but one thing — that you may not find foemen worthy of your steel. I know that I can rely upon you.'

In his belief that he had the full confidence of his men, McClellan has the world with him. They loved him and he loved them. One of the most charming things about him is his deep interest in the welfare of his soldiers, his sympathy with their struggles and their difficulties, though some think he carried this so far as to spare them in a fashion not really merciful in the end. When he is temporarily deprived of command and his army is fighting, he begs passionately to be allowed at least to die with them. When he is restored to them, he portrays their enthusiastic delight in perhaps the most curious of many passages of that nature. 'As soon as I came to them the poor fellows broke through all restraints, rushed from the ranks and crowded around me, shouting, yelling, shedding tears, thanking God that they were with me again, and begging me to lead them back to battle. It was a wonderful scene, and proved that I had the hearts of these men.'

The most singular instance of McClellan's excessive confidence in his own judgment is his perpetual, haunting, unalterable belief that the enemy were far superior to him in numbers. No evidence, no argument, no representation from subordinates or outsiders could shake him in this opinion. Send more men, more men, more men, the rebels outnumber me, was his unceasing cry. The curious force of this prepossession, as well as the man's characteristic ingenuity, shows in his reply to Lincoln's suggestion that as Lee had sent away troops, it must be a good time to attack. Ah, says McClellan, in effect, can't you see that if he has troops to spare, his numbers must be too prodigious for me to cope with?

This illusion as to numbers naturally made negative success seem triumph, and magnified really great things into even greater. The general

writes during Antietam, 'We are in the midst of the most terrible battle of the war — perhaps of history. Thus far it looks well, but I have great odds against me.' In fact, Lee's force was far less than McClellan's.

All of the general's undeniably great achievements are thus made much of, until impatient critics are strongly inclined to depreciate them. He announces that he has 'secured solidly for the Union that part of West Virginia north of the Kanawha and west of the mountains.' No doubt he had; but — Of the battle of Malvern Hill he says, 'I doubt whether, in the annals of war, there was ever a more persistent and gallant attack, or a more cool and effective resistance.' And again, 'I have every reason to believe that our victory at Malvern Hill was a crushing one — one from which he [the enemy] will not readily recover.' The last words McClellan wrote were a laudation of the Army of the Potomac — and its commander — in reference to the retreat from the Peninsula. 'It was one of those magnificent episodes which dignify a nation's history, and are fit subjects for the grandest efforts of the poet and the painter.' Hooker — to be sure, a somewhat prejudiced witness — says of the same event: 'It was like the retreat of a whipped army. We retreated like a parcel of sheep; everybody on the road at the same time; and a few shots from the rebels would have panic-stricken the whole command.' Finally, of his last battle, Antietam, the general says, 'Those on whose judgment I rely tell me that I fought the battle splendidly and that it was a masterpiece of art.'

I ask myself how the witty and vivacious woman who charmed Meade received such words as these. Did that little critical devil nudge her, or did she loyally 'expect his coming again'?

A commander who took this view of what he had accomplished almost necessarily developed an extraordinary sense of his importance to the cause and to the country. McClellan was important. We should never forget it. Only, perhaps no one was so important as he deemed himself to be. His deep sense of responsibility is delightfully blended with other marked elements of his character in a brief telegram to Lincoln, shortly before Antietam. 'I have a difficult task to perform, but with God's blessing will accomplish it. . . . My respects to Mrs. Lincoln. Received enthusiastically by the ladies. Will send you trophies.'

Over and over again he repeats that he has saved the country. 'Who would have thought when we were married, that I should so soon be called upon to save my country?' 'I feel some little pride in having, with a beaten and demoralized army, defeated Lee so utterly and saved the North completely.' And in the solemn preface to his book he proclaims to an expectant world: 'Twice at least, I saved the capital, once created and once reorganized a great army.'

The most striking example of this self-exaltation, amounting almost to mania, is the letter written to Burnside, in May, 1862. 'The Government have deliberately placed me in this position. If I win, the greater the glory. If I lose, they will be damned forever both by God and men.' And the tone in which he continues shows that his situation had taken hold of him with an approach to religious ecstasy: 'I sometimes think now that I can almost realize that Mahomet was sincere. When I see the hand of God guarding one so weak as myself, I can almost think myself a chosen instrument to carry out his schemes. Would that a better man had been selected.'

It is no wonder that the bee of dictatorship buzzed in a brain so feverishly

overwrought. That it entered and was considered, if not entertained, there can be no question. Flatterers urged it, and circumstances, viewed as McClellan viewed them, seemed to suggest it. 'The order depriving me of the command created an immense deal of deep feeling in the army — so much so that many were in favor of my refusing to obey the order, and of marching upon Washington to take possession of the government.' The general is said to have remarked to one very near him, 'How these brave fellows love me and what a power their love places in my hands! What is there to prevent my taking the government in my hands?'

The man's own fund of native common sense was there to prevent it. But it is evident that he lovingly considered the possibility. Only, we must remember that such consideration was not prompted by personal motives, but by genuine patriotism. He says so and we must believe him. If no one else but he could save the country, it was his duty to save it. 'I receive letter after letter, have conversation after conversation, calling on me to save the nation, alluding to the presidency, dictatorship, etc. As I hope one day to be united with you forever in heaven, I have no such aspiration. I would cheerfully take the dictatorship and agree to lay down my life when the country was saved.'

III

All this time there was a government in Washington — existing chiefly to annoy him, so McClellan thought. The worst effect of the general's serene — or perturbed — self-confidence was that it bred an entire disbelief in the judgment of others. He was impatient with his subordinates where they differed from him, — did not seek their advice or trust their ability. 'In heaven's name give me some general officers who understand their profession,' he writes in the early days. With his superiors — his few superiors, Halleck, Stanton, Lincoln — and with the government they represented, he endeavored to be civil, but he felt that they knew nothing about war, and where they could not be coaxed, they must be disciplined. Among Lincoln's many difficulties none, perhaps, were greater than McClellan. The president argued patiently, remonstrated gently, reproved paternally, submitted to neglect that seemed like impertinence, kicked his heels like a messenger boy in the general's waiting-room, declared, with his divine self-abnegation, that he would hold McClellan's horse, if that would help win victory. In return, the general patronized his titular commander-in-chief, when things went well, satirized him when they went doubtfully, — 'I do not yet know what are the military plans of the gigantic intellects at the head of the government,' — and when they went ill, uttered unequivocal condemnation: 'It is the most infamous thing that history has recorded.'

Ropes's analysis of McClellan's attitude in this connection is so penetrating and so suggestive that I cannot pass it by. 'There are men so peculiarly constituted that when they have once set their hearts on any project, they cannot bear to consider the facts that militate against their carrying it out; they are impatient and intolerant of them; such facts either completely fall out of their minds, so to speak, as if they had never been heard of, or, if they subsequently make themselves felt, they seem to men of this temper to have assumed an inimical aspect, and, what is worse, inasmuch as it is impossible for any man to get angry with facts, such men instinctively fix upon certain individuals whom they associate in some way, more or less

remote, with these unwelcome facts, and whom they always accuse, in their own thought, at least, of hostility or deception. Such a mind we conceive to have been that of General McClellan.'

It is only thus that we can explain the extreme bitterness of a nature otherwise kindly and generous. The perturbed and anxious spirit saw enemies everywhere, magnified real hostility and imagined hostility where there was none. Political opposition becomes malignant hatred. 'You have no idea of the undying hate with which the abolitionists pursue me, but I take no notice of them.' Anger with Halleck and Stanton was perhaps natural. Many men got angry with Halleck and Stanton. It is not the place to judge either of them here; but it will be generally admitted that their different ways of dealing with subordinates were not such as to inspire a happy frame of mind. Certainly they did not in McClellan. Yet it may be questioned whether either Stanton or Halleck considered the general an object of personal spite or quite deserved the fierce abuse which he showered upon them freely. 'Of all the men I have encountered in high position Halleck was the most hopelessly stupid. It was more difficult to get an idea through his head than can be conceived by any one who never made the attempt.' And to Stanton, 'who would say one thing to a man's face and just the reverse behind his back,' was addressed probably the most impertinent sentence ever written by a soldier to his military superior. 'If I save this army now, I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or to any other persons in Washington. You have done your best to sacrifice this army.'

But the same bitterness was manifested toward men much less deserving of it than the commander-in-chief or the secretary of war. Few of the Northern generals were more hardly used by Fortune than McDowell, and impartial judges declare him to have been a soldier and a gentleman. McClellan tries to treat him well, but finds it hopeless. 'He never appreciated my motives, and felt no gratitude for my forbearance and kindness. . . . I have long been convinced that he intrigued against me to the utmost of his power.' Burnside, again, was McClellan's devoted friend and admirer, until, apparently against his inclination, he allowed himself to be forced into McClellan's place. This is what he gets for it. 'I cannot, from my long acquaintance with Burnside, believe that he would deliberately lie, but I think that his weak mind was turned; that he was confused in action; and that subsequently he really did not know what had occurred and was talked by his staff into any belief they chose.'

To such an extent can a sturdy confidence in self poison minds of a really noble and magnanimous strain.

IV

So we have examined carefully McClellan's own judgment on his own career and achievements. Now let us see what others thought of them. If the discrepancy at times is startling, we can remember the remark of Lee to a subordinate who was trying to draw him out about another subordinate. 'All I can say is, if that is your opinion of General ——, you differ very widely from the general himself.'

Not all critics agree in their judgment, however, in this, any more than in other cases. McClellan has many admirers who speak almost as enthusiastically of what he did and what he might have done, as he could. The less discreet of these are not perhaps always very fortunate in their commendation, exonerating their favorite at the expense of others whom we do not care

to have abused. Thus, George William Curtis asserts that 'from the President down, through the various ranks of politicians and soldiers by whom he was surrounded, all knew in their hearts that the only reason why McClellan had failed to reach Richmond, and been obliged to execute his flank movement to the James, was because McDowell had been arrested by express orders from Washington on his march to effect a junction with McClellan's right.' And Hillard declares that 'General McClellan's communications to the President were generally in reply to inquiries or suggestions from the latter, whose restless and meddlesome spirit was constantly moving him to ask questions, obtrude advice, and comment on military matters, which were as much out of his sphere as they were beyond his comprehension.'

But McClellan has defenders of more weight. The Comte de Paris, influenced no doubt partly by social relations, but clear-sighted in all his judgments, holds decidedly that his friend would have achieved far more if the government had not thwarted him. Lee, a generous adversary, declared with emphasis that McClellan was the best of the generals to whom he was opposed; and an impartial judge of the highest standing, von Moltke, is said to have remarked that if the American commander had been supported as he should have been, the war would have ended two years sooner than it did. Best of all friendly judgments are the sober and discriminating words of Grant. 'It has always seemed to me that the critics of McClellan do not consider this vast and cruel responsibility — the war a new thing to all of us, the army new, everything to do from the outset, with a restless people and Congress. McClellan was a young man when this devolved upon him, and if he did not succeed, it was because the conditions of success were so trying. If McClellan had gone into the war as Sherman, Thomas, or Meade, had fought his way along and up, I have no reason to suppose that he would not have won as high distinction as any of us.'

Even those who are inclined to find fault, find much to praise. As to the general's organizing faculty there is but one verdict. Only genius of the highest order in this line would have made of the Army of the Potomac the magnificent instrument which others were afterwards to use so effectively. Further, both Ropes and Henderson, though feeling that McClellan accomplished much less than he should have done with the means at his disposal, are inclined to agree with him in the belief that he was unduly hampered and thwarted by the Washington authorities; and Palfrey, who, beginning with enthusiastic admiration, was forced in the end to recognize his chieftain's many faults, yet declares that 'there are strong grounds for believing that he was the best commander the Army of the Potomac ever had,' and that 'a growing familiarity with his history as a soldier increases the disposition to regard him with respect and gratitude, and to believe, while recognizing the limitations of his nature, that his failure to accomplish more was partly his misfortune and not altogether his fault.'

It will be observed that most of the praise is in the form of apology and lacks entirely the trumpet tone with which McClellan proclaims his own feats of arms. Much of the criticism of him has no flavor of apology whatever. Nor is this confined to the later reflection of cool military judges. At the height of his popularity, when the army and the country idolized him, outsiders like the grumbling Gurowski refused to believe in his gifts, or his

judgment, or his future. W. H. Russell, meeting him in September, 1861, foresaw, with singular acuteness, that he was not a man of action or not likely to act quickly, and felt that he dallied too much in Washington, instead of being among his troops, stimulating them in victory and consoling or reprimanding them after defeat.

Among the general's own subordinates there was anything but a concert of enthusiasm about his person or his achievements. Fighters like Kearny and Hooker were naturally dissatisfied. The latter did not hesitate to express his opinion freely at all times, telling the Committee on the Conduct of the War that the Peninsula campaign failed simply because of lack of generalship in the commander. While Kearny wrote, in August, 1862, 'McClellan is the failure I ever proclaimed him. He will only get us into more follies — more waste of blood — fighting by driblets. He has lost the confidence of all. . . . He is burnt out.' And Meade, a far saner and more reasonable judge, expresses himself almost as strongly. 'He was always waiting to have everything just as he wanted before he would attack, and before he could get things arranged as he wanted them the enemy pounced on him and thwarted all his plans. There is now no doubt he allowed three distinct occasions to take Richmond to slip through his hands, for want of nerve to run what he considered risks.'

This contemporary judgment of Meade's may be said, on the whole, to anticipate the conclusion of nearly all historians. Some dwell more than others on what might have happened if McClellan had met with fewer difficulties; but there is general agreement that the result of his efforts is as disappointing when viewed now calmly in the light of all known facts as it was to Lincoln and the country in 1862. Swinton, certainly no personal enemy of McClellan, sums up the matter in fairly final fashion. 'He was not a great general; for he had the pedantry of war rather than the inspiration of war. . . . His talent as a tactician was much inferior to his talent as a strategist, and he executed less boldly than he conceived.'

So we recur to the remark of Lee. 'Well, if that is your opinion of General ——, all I can say is that you differ very widely from the general himself.' For what is of interest to us is not McClellan's generalship, but McClellan's character.

V

Thus, after our review of criticism and hostile judgments, we ask ourselves, what impression did all this make on the subject of it? He heard the criticism. He was well aware of the judgments. Did they produce any effect on him? Did he say to himself, after all, I may be mistaken; after all, I may have blundered? Did he have strange doubts and tormenting anxieties, as to whether, possibly, a great opportunity may have come to him and he may not have been equal to it? I have read his writings carefully and I find nothing of the sort. There were moments of trouble, as when Cox noted that 'the complacent look which I had seen upon McClellan's countenance on the 17th [of September] . . . had disappeared. There was a troubled look instead.' There were moments of anguish. 'Franklin told me that McClellan said to him, as they followed Lander's corpse, that he almost wished he was in the coffin instead of Lander.' Moments of self-distrust there were not, or they left no traces.

It is true, as Mr. Rhodes points out, that with adversity McClellan's letters, even to his wife, grew somewhat humbler and less assured; yet in his

book, written twenty years later, the tone is much what it was at first. It is true that in many places he recognized generally that he was human and that humanity is always liable to err. He even goes so far as to admit — generally — that 'while striving conscientiously to do my best, it may well be that I have made great mistakes that my vanity does not permit me to perceive.' But as to particular action in particular circumstances, he cannot feel anything but thorough contentment. His much-complained-of delays he justifies entirely. 'Nor has he [the general is using the third person], even at this distant day, and after much bitter experience, any regret that he persisted in his determination.' His most singular error, that as to the numbers of the enemy, was probably never shaken, to the end. In short, one brief sentence sums up his complicated character in this regard with delightful completeness: 'That I have to a certain extent failed I do not believe to be my fault, though my self-conceit probably blinds me to many errors that others see.'

Not satisfied with impugning McClellan's generalship, his enemies went further and attacked his loyalty. His known dislike of radical abolitionism, and his long-cherished hope that the war might be ended with little bloodshed, constantly suggested charges of indifference to Union success. It was said that he delayed purposely. It was said that he showed traitorous friendliness to Southerners. It was said that he did not wish the war to come to a too speedy close. Lincoln himself, in a moment of despair after the second Bull Run, said to a member of his household, 'He has acted badly towards Pope; he really wanted him to fail.' And the sum of all these charges is given in the remarkable scene between President and general which has been recorded for us by McClellan himself. On the 8th of March, 1862, McClellan was in the President's office and Lincoln intimated in very plain terms that he had heard many rumors to the effect that the general was removing the defenders from Washington for the purpose of giving the city over to the enemy. The President concluded by saying that such a course would certainly look like treason.

Lincoln must have been deeply moved indeed when he took such a step as this, and no one can blame McClellan for resenting it bitterly and demanding an instant retraction, for we know, as well as he did, that the charge was utterly and preposterously false. Whatever dispute there may be about McClellan's generalship, however one may question the wisdom and even the propriety of his conduct toward his superiors, no one who has read his intimate letters can doubt for a moment that he was thoroughly and sincerely patriotic, desired only the welfare of his country, and worked in the very best way he knew for the complete and speedy restoration of the Union. His way may not have been Lincoln's way, may not have been the best way; but such as it was, he was ready to give his life for it. 'The unity of this nation, the preservation of our institutions, are so dear to me, that I have willingly sacrificed my private happiness with the single object of doing my duty to my country. When the task is accomplished, I shall be glad to return to the obscurity from which events have drawn me.'

VI

Such words have been written by others, not always with entire sincerity. But the whole tenor of McClellan's life bears witness to his truth in this matter. He was not only a patriot, he was a man of singular purity and elevation of character. He was not only ready to

talk about great sacrifices, he was ready to do what is far harder, make little sacrifices without talking about them. Even discounting the enthusiasm of a biographer, we must recognize the force of such testimony as the following: 'Of all men I have ever known McClellan was the most unselfish. Neither in his public life nor in his private life did he ever seek anything for himself. He was constantly doing something for some one else; always seeking to do good, confer pleasure, relieve sorrow, gratify a whim, do something for another.'

His unfailing courtesy toward high and low is universally recognized, and it was not the courtesy of indifferent ease, but was founded on genuine sympathy, a quick imaginative perception of the situation of others, and a desire to adapt himself to that situation so far as was compatible with greater needs and duties.

In short, the man's life throughout was guided by fine feelings and high ideals. That, as a candidate for the presidency against Lincoln, in 1864, he was influenced by no thought of personal ambition is difficult to believe. If so, it was probably the first and the last case of the kind in the history of that office, Washington perhaps excepted. But I do believe that McClellan sincerely thought that the country needed him and his political convictions, and that he would never have surrendered one jot of those political convictions for political success. In his later years he became governor of New Jersey, and in that office so carried himself as to win the respect and esteem of persons of all parties. A competent and impartial critic remarks that 'A study of his messages and other State papers will show that the vital questions he ever held in mind were those connected with the welfare of the people, while those relating to his own political future were absolutely non-existent.'

Also, back of all these admirable qualities was a religious faith as simple as it was sincere. Russell thought the general's extreme anxiety for Sabbath observance in the army a little inappropriate, if not a little puerile. But no one can call puerile the high ideal of Christian restraint in warfare set forth in the Harrison's Landing letter to the President. 'All private property taken for military use should be paid or receipted for; pillage and waste should be treated as high crimes; all unnecessary trespass sternly prohibited, and offensive demeanor by the military towards citizens promptly rebuked.'

It is undeniable that Sherman, working on the 'War is hell' plan, accomplished more immediate results, but there were after-effects, also, of a less desirable character.

The charm of McClellan's personal religion, as it appears casually in all his writing, is very great. Perhaps it is nowhere greater than in the simple and touching letter written to a friend in later years.

'I fancy, Sam, that we will never reach that land where it is all afternoon in any ship built by mortal hands. Our fate is to work and still to work as long as there is any work left in us; and I do not doubt that it is best, for I can't help thinking that when we reach that other and far better land we shall still have work to do through the long ages; only we shall then see as we go on that it is all done for the Master and under his own eye; and we will like it and never grow weary of it, as we often do here when we don't see clearly to what end we are working, and our work brings us in contact with all sorts of men and things not pleasant to rub against. I suppose that the more we work here, the better we shall be trained for that other work which after all is

the great end towards which we move or ought to be moving.'

These are winning words; they show a winning and a simple soul, the soul of one who was assuredly a fine type of the Christian — and we are proud to add, of the American — gentleman.

I say 'winning' advisedly; for as yet I have dwelt little on McClellan's wonderful power of winning men. As a fighter he may have failed. As a leader, at least so far as the faculty of gaining absolute devotion goes, he assuredly succeeded. It is true that not all his officers were faithful to him. In his treatment of them he was led astray by flattery and by the intoxicating influence of his overwhelming position. But his power over the common soldier of the Army of the Potomac, even after comparative failure, is so wonderful as to be hard to believe and so touching as to be impossible to resist. No general in the war, on either side, unless Beauregard, who curiously resembled McClellan in many ways, evoked such instantaneous and entire enthusiasm.

The subtle causes of this would be difficult to trace. Perhaps the love of popularity counted for something; but human sympathy and kindness assuredly counted for much. As to the effects there can be no dispute. 'Let military critics or political enemies say what they will, he who could so move upon the hearts of a great army as the wind sways long rows of standing corn, was no ordinary man,' writes General Walker. And one who witnessed the passionate outburst of the troops when their leader was temporarily restored to them in September, 1862, describes it in a way never to be forgotten. 'The climax seemed to be reached, however, at Middletown, where we first caught sight of the enemy. Here, upon our arrival, we found General McClellan sitting on his horse in the road. . . . As each organization passed the general, the men became apparently forgetful of everything but their love for him. They cheered and cheered again, until they became so hoarse they could cheer no longer. It seemed as if an intermission had been declared in order that a reception might be tendered to the general-in-chief. A great crowd continually surrounded him, and the most extravagant demonstrations were indulged in. Hundreds even hugged the horse's legs and caressed his head and mane.

'While the troops were thus surging by, the general continually pointed with his finger to the gap in the mountains through which our path lay. It was like a great scene in a play, with the roar of the guns for an accompaniment. . . . General McClellan may have had opponents elsewhere; he had few, if any, among the soldiers whom he commanded.'

This magnetic power over the hearts of men is something great leaders — Wellington, for instance — have often lacked. It is something the very greatest leaders must have, if they would retain their hold. What a pity that McClellan, having it in such abundant measure, should not have been able to employ it for his purposes; that possessing such a great instrument, he should not have been able to use it to great ends. He himself attributed his failure to circumstances. This we cannot do. Others have wrung fortune out of far more unfavorable circumstances. Let us say, rather, that he was a man of really great ability given an opportunity too great for him. As an able soldier, a true patriot, and a loyal gentleman, he did what he could.